

## [Family Policies in Asia](#)

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Call for Papers

Date:

February 28, 2019

Location:

Singapore

Subject Fields:

Childhood and Education, Humanities, Public Policy, Social Sciences

### **CALL FOR PAPERS (DEADLINE: 28 FEBRUARY 2019)**

Conference on Family Policies in Asia

21-22 November, Singapore

Family policies have been on the rise in Asia in order to respond to recent dramatic demographic and socioeconomic changes that challenge both families and states.

“Family policy” has long been seen as a “fuzzy concept”, as the government laws and regulations that are designed intentionally to support families, enhance family member’s well-being, and strengthen family relationships can all be regarded as family policies no matter whether they directly aim at families (Bogensneider, 2006; Gauthier, 1998). Family policies are thus highly interrelated with and often overlap other policy fields, such as population, labour market, education, health, housing, gender equality, and sustainable development goals (Richardson, 2018).

Furthermore, the definition and practice of “family” change according to the socio-economic, political, religious and cultural framework of individual countries. Asian countries are characterised by a high degree of diversity in political, economic, and cultural terms as well as corresponding national and local family policies, in spite of the common practice that families are the main (sometimes solo) welfare provider (Yeung et al, 2018). Thus, the goals and outcomes of family policies differ from country to country and at times are controversial.

These sophisticated “Asian” contexts make the understanding and making of family policies difficult. However, such complexity brings great opportunities for scholars to enrich current knowledge, both academically and empirically, on family issues and public policies. What is lacking for now is the conceptual framework for comparative studies and the understanding of the relationship between family policies and the distinctive Asian cultural and social factors.

By bringing together scholars across the disciplines to interrogate Asian family policies, this conference aims to facilitate the making of a culturally-informed theory in family policies. Conceptual papers on family policies and empirical research using cross-sectional or longitudinal design, covering family characteristics and policy measures in Asian countries are welcome. *Comparative studies in East Asia, Southeast Asia, and South Asia* are preferred. We accept papers discussing, but not limited to, the following themes:

**Theme One: The Domain of Family Policies**

- What is the relationship between welfare regimes and family policies? Is there a specific “Asian” welfare regime or are the welfare regimes in Asian countries the variants of the existing models?
- How should we define family policies (in theoretical and empirical terms)? Is the definition of family policy contextual or universal? Which policy measures should be included in family policies? Are housing, education, and health policy measures also family policies and to what extent are they linked to “family” in different Asian societies?
- What is the relationship between family and population policies, particularly pro-natalist and anti-natalist ones, in Asia?
- What is the relationship between family and social protection policy? Are there cross-national differences in their relationship? What is the development of the relationship between these two policies over time?

**Theme Two: Family Policy Measures along the Life-Course**

- What is the general picture of the family policy focusing on partnership formation, childbirth, childrearing, and the care for and well-being of elder people in individual Asian countries? What are the similarities and differences in the design, implementation and challenges of these national family policies? What are the trends of these policies in these Asian countries?
- Do these life event-oriented family policies focus on economic (e.g., child/family allowance, tax relief, and family credit) or ecological (e.g., provision for childcare service) measures? What are the similarities and differences in the preference for and implementation of these measures among these Asian countries? What are the trends of these measures in Asian countries?
- How do family policy measures influence the practice of parenthood?

**Theme Three: Family Policies and the Wider Contexts**

- To what extent do family policies in individual countries reflect the tension between rapid economic and social changes and the limited shift in kinship systems, family structures and obligations? To what extent do these family policies alleviate this tension?
- How universal or targeted are family policy measures in terms of social class as well as ethnic, religious, gender, citizenship divides? For instance, do the policy measures deepen gender division of labour or actively challenge traditional gender roles?
- What constraints and opportunities shape the options of individual actors by the existing policy profiles? E.g. there is an increasing inclusion of women in the logic of the market economy through their labour market participation but institutional structures and private living arrangements remain reigned by traditional social norms, gender ideologies and values.
- Among various family policy objectives, three in particular - work/family reconciliation, gender equality, and income protection - have emerged as crucial considerations for the formulation of family policy in Western industrialized countries (Kang, 2018). Which are the main objectives in Asian societies? Can distinct family policy regimes be identified?
- What is the level of familialism, which indicates to what extent the family contributes to welfare provision or, conversely, the level of defamilialization, meaning the extent to which welfare producing tasks are shifted from the family onto the market and the state in the Asian

- countries? How is familialism related to the multigenerational family structure?
- Has the diffusion of family policy measures (or the promotion of certain standards and programs) been affected by the activities of international organizations and/or internationally active non-governmental organizations?
  - What is the role of family policies in supporting the needs of non-traditional families (e.g., cohabitation, same-sex partnership and LGBT families, single-parent families, and blended families)? What is the relationship between social policies and non-traditional family forms?

### SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS

Paper proposals should include a title, an abstract (250 words maximum) and a brief personal biography of 100 words. Please note that only previously unpublished papers or those not already committed elsewhere can be accepted. A Special Issue in an internationally referred journal or a book will be published based on selected papers presented at the conference. By participating in the conference, you agree to participate in the future publication plans of the organizers. Hotel accommodation and a contribution towards airfare will be provided for accepted paper participants (one author per paper).

Please submit your proposal using the provided [template](#) to Ms Valerie Yeo at [valerie.yeo@nus.edu.sg](mailto:valerie.yeo@nus.edu.sg) by **28 February 2019**. Notifications of acceptance will be sent out by **31 March 2019**. Participants will be required to send in a completed draft paper of about 5,000 words by **15 October 2019**.

### CONFERENCE CONVENORS

**Prof Wei-Jun Jean Yeung** | National University of Singapore

**Prof Sonja Drobníč** | University of Bremen, Germany

**Dr Wei-Yun Chung** | National University of Singapore

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